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E. H. Corbridge
Eton 1861

ETON REFORM

LONDON

LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, AND ROBERTS

1861

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ETON REFORM.

A GENTLEMAN of high authority has in a somewhat whimsical form laid before the world a minute and critical account of Eton, and has been followed by unfriendly and uncandid writers in a popular magazine and in an influential weekly review. At a time of unexampled prosperity, a school, which is in no ordinary sense public, finds itself charged with scandalous deficiencies, assumed to exist on the evidence of one, who apparently intended to treat it as an institution with the utmost tenderness, and to limit his discontent to something particular and almost personal. A friend, who delicately indicates a fault or two, is forced into the service of a rancorous enemy; and a third writer, not stopping to notice the discrepancies of the two first, without asking for information which he must have known to be accessible, takes it for granted that the vituperator is right in matters of fact. It is not well that people should be left in the dark about the state of the school. Neither the defenders nor the reformers of Eton can afford to let Sir John Coleridge be their representative.

A clever barrister once tried to get some available notion of Eton from a master in the school, and after a series of well-aimed questions threw up the research with a laugh of despair, saying that Eton was as hard to understand as the British Constitution.

Perhaps it is hard to understand for similar reasons. It may be that its complexity is due to the engrafting of new things on old, to the irresolute expansion of germinal principles, to the ingenious contrivance of strange uses for

old-fashioned engines, and to the obstinate piecing and cobbling of worn-out stuff, which one original thinker lifted above the need of compromise would once for all trample under foot. One may almost venture to say, that a school would not be, what Eton is acknowledged to be, a true sample of the nation, if it were impressed with a form of statistical regularity more precise than can be found in the Established Church, the ancient Universities, or the political administration of England.

But this is no answer to an inquirer, who has a practical purpose in inquiring. A father of a boy that wants education looks with good reason for an intelligible prospectus, asks what are the terms, the hours of study, the subjects studied and their relative estimation, the nature of the prizes and distinctions, and above all the probabilities of adequate preparation for this or that line of life after leaving the school.

No doubt a great many men take a school as they do a shop, trusting to reputation or fashion. But they should remember that it is easier to ascertain the value of some purchased commodities than of others, and that, unless they have themselves been highly educated, there is no commodity harder for them to estimate than education. They should be reminded, that they are liable to be deceived about the amount of work done at a school, because there may be a tacit collusion between teacher and pupil, and they should trust, not so much to what a boy says in the holidays, as to the evidence given by an elder brother who has left school long enough to reflect on the use he made of his boyhood.

It is a serious charge against a school, though it may really be found ultimately to attach to a single teacher only, if a young man deliberately tells you that he went to an University unprepared in grammar, and yet believing, and allowed by his schoolmasters to believe, that he was well prepared. It may have been beyond the power of the teachers to imbue this particular mind with sufficient grammar, but it was within their province to make him aware of his invincible ignorance. This is supposed to be brought about at a public school by public and honest examinations.

The plain dealing and faithful criticism, which the scholar

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has found in his school, let him render to it in his turn. Let him without favour or malice consider and declare, what he finds wanting in the place in which he was trained. He is worth more as a witness now, than he will be by the time he has made a name in the world. It may be confidently said, that hardly any dunce or fool leaves such a place as Eton without knowing that he is dunce or fool; for though his friends cannot bear to receive or his tutor to administer the plain truth, there is in the school machinery an indisputable elenchus; and perhaps this is the best thing to be had in the way of self-knowledge all through life.

The value of this evidence is enhanced by the minute comparison of school with school, which is so common in the conversation of young fellow-students and fellow-travellers; by an undergraduate's critical though affectionate visits paid to the place of his education; by his increased intimacy with his old tutor, who allows him to get behind the scenes and shows him what he does and what he leaves undone; and by his familiarity with young men, who were his contemporaries and are now teachers in the old school. To intelligent "old Etonians" who have graduated in the last few years, who are accustomed to compare with their own times the times of their younger brothers, and to compare experiences with Harrow and Rugby men, appeal may be made from those critics of Eton who confound the existing school with the school of Keate, or from those who try it by the standard of an ideal and symmetrical Academy.

If any father of boys, who has read what has been lately written about Eton, is troubled with doubts about the expediency of sending his boys there, he cannot do better than consult some "old Etonian" of recent date. By him he will probably be assured that the school is substantially efficient; worked by men as honest and liberal as others of their profession; improving year by year in details of method, though constantly liable to relapse into inert self-complacency; cramped and stinted by certain oppressive influences, yet struggling towards the gradual adoption of new arts; suffering, but not nearly so much as might have been expected, from its old connection with a sister-college; con-

taining many defects which its friends have been freely speaking of before they were assailed by public writers, but not corrupted by the selfish avarice which has been so recklessly alleged against its functionaries. It would be natural, but not expedient, if in the mind of one that remembered how hard it was to draw him from social pleasure to unpractical study, how patiently some homely middle-aged tutor strove day by day to make the best of his literary performances, how he profited, if not by the intellectual energy, yet by the virtuous example of some humble scholar once his censor and now his friend, there were kindled, by the coarse and rude words of an anonymous railer, so warm a glow of indignation, as to blind him to the natural and almost inevitable faults of a mediæval College discharging the duties of standard-bearer for the modern British aristocracy.

The ordinary feelings of an old Etonian are, indeed, compounded of an unreasoning regard for the place where he first tasted action and hope, with a more or less good-humoured contempt for the books he used to handle and the men that used to handle him. To meet such old Etonians at an anniversary dinner, and hear them glorify the men of fashion who had been, as often as not, mere idlers at Eton, whilst protesting against turning "the dear old place" into a "knowledge-shop," was neither good nor (if one analysed the talk) pleasant for those who were actually holding office there. Luckily even these "Floreat Etona" people have moved on a little since they became fathers, and some of them are as anxious as they should be that their sons be better educated than they were themselves.

But they are not even now the best patrons of the school; and those, who care for its free and full improvement, must look to younger men brought up in days when it was, if nothing else, efficient in classical instruction, and beginning to feel the necessity of amending its time-table and incorporating other studies. Such men, one may hope, will escape the danger to which the actual authors of improvements are liable, the danger of thinking that these improvements have established an unimpeachable character. They probably perceive, that whatever changes may have been made or attempted

in our old classical schools, they are not in their boldness analogous to the changes made of late years at Oxford and Cambridge. They are qualified to express an opinion, whether the discipline of Eton would be changed for the better by a great increase in the number of masters, or the instruction improved by a better class of teachers so much as by better arrangements. After comparing, in point of real usefulness, the schoolmasters who wearied their boyhood, with the more dignified lecturers who have had the charge of their early manhood, they may be invited to form a deliberate estimate of the gain to be derived at Eton by throwing open the masterships to all Oxford and Cambridge graduates, and perhaps to bear witness how far the great rival of Eton has thriven by the free choice of teachers, and by taking men for masters on the ground of their public academical reputation. They may be able to judge, by reflection on their own experience, what number of boys will stir a man up to the work of teaching, without overworking him, and what the size of a class should be to give every boy a certainty of frequent examination, and at the same time a sufficient amount of gregarious excitement. If not prepared to give an off-hand opinion on such professional questions, they will at least perceive that they cannot be settled off-hand by so grossly numerical a method of calculation as seems to satisfy the rough contributor to the "Cornhill Magazine." Not by reckoning up a few isolated feats of youthful cleverness, not by counting over the cretins who have failed to satisfy the soldier-pedants of the Horse Guards, but by a wide induction from colleges and regiments, they might determine the typical Etonian. Knowing as they do, that it is often the family, not the school, that gives the mould to run the wax of boyhood into, they might not the less remember, that the school in its turn can act, and ought to act, upon the family. Having felt at college, how fine a thing it is to be in contact with a really intellectual teacher, they would ask, how this blessing could be insured in earlier years for those in whom they were interested.

A body of enlightened opinion might be formed, which would attract rather than force the school into improvements,

wholly unconnected with topics broached either by the pensive friend or the violent accuser; and it is to guide well-wishers in forming this public opinion, that a man well acquainted with the actual state of Eton has ventured to take up his pen.

Since so many men's attention has been called to the article in the "Cornhill Magazine," it will probably be most convenient to follow the writer step by step, with occasional digressions. And as it is wished that the upshot of all this discussion should be not a quarrel but a reform, and as, in spite of the offensiveness of the Magazine article, there is some truth at the bottom of it, the reader is at once warned, that he will be disappointed, if he expects to find in these pages a mere polemical reply.

It is not worth while to notice the earlier letter of "Paterfamilias," now forgotten by most readers, further than to say, that his account of Eton as it was in his day was in the main fair enough, and to admit that some allowance is to be made for him, considering the education he received, in dealing with his obliquities of judgment. It is indeed a standing wonder, that so many men should be philosophers, who were trained as boys on hardly anything but a study of inflections and phrases. It is not surprising, that one, who had nothing to employ his growing mind upon but a thin and hazy study of words, should be a hard and impetuous thinker in middle life.

If the old men; who thought Eton a good school of literature before even Greek syntax was taught there, are shocked at the unscrupulous language of "Paterfamilias," it may be said to them, without paradox, that their own nursing-mother is answerable in some measure for having sent forth so unchastened a mind. Indeed, one might assert that the revilers of Eton, who speak as "old Etonians," are always so far right, that they were themselves, either from the general barbarism of ancient "Harchester," or from the negligence and incapacity of particular tutors in later and better days, miserably brought up in boyhood.

In the first few paragraphs of his second letter, "Paterfamilias" grapples with a writer in the "Quarterly Review,"

who, if he knows Eton at all, knows it only in its old barbarous state, and has thrown very little light on any subject connected with it.*

But it will not do to let pass without protest the quotations which "Paterfamilias" has printed in italics.

"In all [public schools], the machinery for exciting the emulation and calling forth the energies of *average* boys, might be amended; *in some it has almost to be created.* . . . In all, the tutorial system might be improved; *the numbers of the tutors should be increased, and in some schools the standard of their qualification should be raised, and their sphere of duty enlarged.* Where the houses of tutors are too large, nothing can be easier than to employ an assistant, and no dame's house should be without a resident tutor."

It is presumed, that wherever "Paterfamilias" italicises, he thinks the words thus marked are specially applicable to the particular object of his attack.

Shall then Eton be admitted to have no machinery for exciting the emulation and calling forth the energies of average boys?

Look to the School List. Our critic holds it up to scorn for "ludicrous profusion of prizes and decorations."

Of the first 583 boys in the School List, taken in August 1860, there are 244 to whose names a mark or marks are attached. Some of these names have marks of honour for both classical and mathematical studies. It may be supposed, that these are the names of boys above the average. But there are 190 marks for mathematics only. Surely these marks denote some encouragement of what may fairly be called average abilities. There cannot be many boys who have not some chance of distinction. This does not look like the exclusive fostering of a few select clever boys. Again, it is well known to all who have been at Eton within the last ten years, that the boys are examined, each class by

* The Quarterly Reviewer appraises with sound judgment certain school tales, more or less sentimental. It may illustrate the general character of Eton to point out that no such books could be conceived as having been engendered by Eton experiences. Materials for a fervid romance you would no more find in Eton than in the House of Commons.

its own teacher, at the end of each term, in the lessons of the term, generally with composition, and with a special subject, such as a portion of history; and that boys, who are not brilliant versifiers and not quick in answering questions in class, take considerable pains, and often with success, to do well in these "Collections."

On the performances of a boy in Collections, compared with the general report given of him by his teachers in classics, mathematics, and extra studies, is founded the letter written every vacation by the boy's tutor to his parent or guardian. It is submitted to those who have had any experience of modern Eton, either as scholars or as the fathers of scholars, that this letter is a very valuable engine for calling forth the energies of all boys. "Emulation," perhaps, it does not directly touch; but there is something better than emulation. There is such a thing in young people as a sense of duty, and this is firmly sustained by the deliberate but not formal correspondence between tutors and parents. A boy thinks seriously of his "report" before and after it is written. These documents are not mere matters of routine, but biographical records of a boy's progress. In some cases a father or a guardian imitates the schoolmaster so far as to write a report of the boy's studies and even of his behaviour in the vacation, and this with excellent effect. The Quarterly Reviewer seems to think that "the tutorial system" is common to all public schools. It is believed to be up to the present time confined to Eton and Harrow, and to be carried out far more at Eton than at Harrow. The practice of writing reports, — not tabulated abstracts, nor extracts from a mechanical school-register, but real letters, expressed in ethical language, with carefully graduated terms of praise and blame, with retrospect, comparison, suggestion, warning, and request, with guarded utterance of sympathy, with such reserve as makes the letter fit to show to the boy himself, and yet with such plainness of speech as leaves the parent no room for self-deception, — this practice is understood, after due inquiry, to distinguish the tutorial system of Eton from that of the great school to which it is so nearly akin.

In the management of a class, and of a pupil-room, it may be called an Eton principle, to give each master or tutor considerable freedom in devising from time to time new ways of eliciting emulation. Many of these contrivances are probably the common stock of teachers. Many depend for their efficacy on the peculiar powers of the individual. There is at least no lack of inventions for counteracting listlessness and negligence; but there are hindrances to good teaching at Eton, which "Paterfamilias" does not dream of, which nevertheless are deeply felt, and will be removed.

Yet, with all the devices of school-organisers, there will remain a dead load of indifference that cannot be lifted. As soon as boys are old enough to ask the question, "Why do we learn these lessons?"—and they do ask it very early in their career—it strains the ingenuity of grown-up people to explain to them the bearing of dead languages upon their after-life, and, as a matter of fact, they are bribed to learn things that they take no interest in, and obstinately believe to be useless, by the great and peculiar social pleasures of school and college, which they would have to forego, if they exchanged Greek and Latin for professional and practical studies.

It is this natural indifference to ancient literature, much more than the wealth and fashion of their families, which causes the great bulk of an Eton master's difficulties. It would, with all-but a few heaven-born scholars, be an almost overwhelming nightmare of fruitless struggle, but for the interest that a boy takes in anything that looks like his own creation.

The same instinct which guides the infant in putting his wooden bricks together, or a little girl in clothing her doll, lies at the bottom of verse-making.

There is not merely something to be done, but something to be made.

Even the dullest boy has some satisfaction in turning out a verse that will scan and construe. In composition we have the required machinery for eliciting the energies of ordinary minds.

There are very few young boys at Eton who can, and very

few older boys who will, get their verses written for them entirely. Those, who cannot be quite independent, shrink, as a general rule, from a complete abandonment of the attempt to compose. A good many get more or less help from their school-fellows, but even in this process they are not wholly inactive, nor uninterested in the reception of the manuscript.

But, setting aside the actual idlers and dunces, there is no doubt that a boy of average ability — and it is of him that “*Paterfamilias*” requires us to speak — takes a marked and a constant interest in his composition; and this is met half-way by the tutor, whose business it is to give to every exercise a more or less respectful and deliberate examination, to try to understand the writer’s meaning, to correct what is barbarous in his language, to give a sample or two of better thought as well as better phraseology, and to countersign the manuscript with some expression of opinion as to its merits. Whilst perhaps not more than one boy in four of the fifth form, and a smaller proportion of those below the fifth form, labour at their composition in the hope of being “sent up for good,” there is hardly one boy in fifty all through the school that does not highly value a good mark affixed to his exercise by his tutor, and this not so much in rivalry with his neighbours, as in weekly comparison of himself with himself.

It is suggested for consideration, that there has been nothing devised by teachers, which is at once more encouraging and more humbling to boys than this peculiarly Etonian practice of looking over exercises in the pupil-room. It need hardly be remarked, that the tutor’s work is overhauled, and his estimate of merit independently reviewed, by the colleague, to whom the fair copy is shown up in school.

Other schools, such as Shrewsbury (to which Eton owes its best scholarship by reflection from Cambridge), may have attained greater success in the imitation of ancient authors; but this success is the glory of the few chosen and highly-trained students. The school which Sir John Coleridge sighs over as incapable of supporting the renown of Keate

and Lonsdale* (you might as well reproach England for failing to turn out a regular succession of Byrons and Shelleys), may boldly compete with any other in the tastefulness and accuracy of average classical exercises, and in the industry of men and boys embodied therein.

This is the pith and substance of literary activity at Eton; and the young men, whose criticism has been invited, have frequent opportunities of seeing an ordinary heap of altered exercises on a tutor's desk, and of judging whether the old staple commodity is really falling off in quality.

One more engine for keeping up the diligence of middling boys is worth mentioning. A boy at Eton, beginning his career at the bottom of the upper school and staying out his full time, takes what may be called by no great strain of analogy four degrees. He is examined four times, not, as in Collections, for honour merely, but for his place or school rank. There is hardly any boy, however careless, who is indifferent to the result of these trials, which are indeed the terror of the weak and backward, whilst they give ample opportunity to those who have ungrammatical minds to make the most of their historical, geographical, or scriptural knowledge, and for boys of real power they present all the advantages of fair and severe competition. Those who have had sons at Eton in the last few years will probably be ready to admit, that each of these important examinations has been a real stepping-stone in a boy's course of education, and a searching test of his proficiency.

These institutions, then, the terminal "Collections," the tutorial reports, the care bestowed upon middling composition, and the series of public "trials," are laid before a candid reader as parts of a machinery actually existing for "giving average boys a fair chance of education."

A few words may be said on what the Magazine quotes from the Review with regard to houses.

* Sir J. C. should remember that Keate and Lonsdale were not contemporaries: at least they stand fourteen years apart in the Cambridge Calendar. Perhaps, at equal intervals, he might pick out single exercises that would comfort him. But, in fact, such comparisons are mere minutiae of literary history.

“Where the houses of tutors are too large.” When is a tutor’s house too large? The large houses at Eton contain about thirty boys each. There is no great schoolhouse as at Rugby or Harrow. There is indeed “College,” where seventy boys live under the same roof. These seventy King’s scholars are under the inspection of the head master, and he is aided in ruling them by one of the clergymen employed in the chapel and in the parish, invested also with the disciplinary powers of an assistant master. But it would be rather difficult to contrive honourable and sufficient duties for an assistant tutor in a house of thirty boys.

As for the dames, there are but few left, at least of the right sex; for, with a curious contempt of gender, the boys give the title of dame to clergymen and other men, who keep boarding-houses, not being tutors.

The real principle to be maintained is, that no one should rule a house full of boys, or have disciplinary power, who does not also teach. In the long run boys respect those rulers only who bring intellect and knowledge to bear upon them.

Conversely, no one should teach, at least habitually, who has no penal jurisdiction.

Sir J. Coleridge’s proposal, that Fellows of the College should give lectures as Professors, is as unpractical as the reviewer’s suggestion about under-tutors. Neither position would command the respect of the boys.

To return to the subject of boarding-houses, it is here asserted, and appeal is again made to modern “old Etonians” for their support of the assertion, that, provided a house is large enough to have a certain position in the school (analogous to that of a college in an university), there is no signal disadvantage in its being a dame’s house. In other words, it is, as a general rule, worse for a boy to be at a small tutor’s house than at a large dame’s house.

A dame’s house is not necessarily the better for having a master resident in it; but, as a matter of fact, every lady who keeps house is supported in the maintenance of discipline by the daily visits of a master, whether resident in the house or not, assigned to her as an intermediate agent between her and

the head master. Probably most Eton reformers would say that there ought to be no dames at all. Certain it is, that the houses are wanted for men engaged in teaching, and that the presence of those who derive a profit from the school without aiding in the instruction of students is a great hindrance to the due enlargement of the teaching force. At all events, the suggestion of the reviewer cannot be said to hit the right nail on the head.

It must be left to Sir John Coleridge to say whether he accepts or not that "entire agreement" which his Cornhill admirer and harbinger so heartily offers him, and whether his mild and delicate suggestion of possible improvements in King Henry's foundation was really prompted by the hasty vituperations of a writer who, after inspecting a Woolwich list of examined candidates, taunted Eton with inferiority to St. Andrew's College, Bradfield.

To an ordinary mind it would seem as if it were due to the lofty reputation of the retired Judge to lose no time in disclaiming any sympathy with so incongruous an ally, and in particular to protest against the uncharitable application of his truly pious words about the emotion awakened by seeing the great assemblage of boys in Eton College Chapel. He that wrote of that spectacle as one that must move the heart of every Christian and every patriot, must say for himself whether he allows his language to be quoted as part of a railing accusation against the leaders of that flock: as if they were so deadened by avarice as to look on so many young worshippers as mere contributors to their wealth, as if they alone were neither religious nor patriotic enough to be mindful of what was due to the hope of their Church, and the flower of their nation.

Who is this that with such a coolness of assumption imputes "gross neglect" to "gentlemen of position and education"? What right has he who elsewhere compares the self-reliance and manliness of public-school boys with the "morbid precocity" of children grovelling in the gutter, to speak at all of Eton boys as the objects of religious aspirations? Let him keep to his own hard statistics, and his worldly valuation

of knowledge, and leave the tender words of Christian philosophy to be quoted by those who know the sweetness and the virtue of boyhood.

"Sir John Coleridge," says "Paterfamilias," "complains that a small and comparatively obscure College at Cambridge enjoys the valuable monopoly of supplying Eton with masters." This may be "smart" writing, smart enough to satisfy an editor whose name happens to be rather closely connected with the college thus unseasonably taunted *; but it is "smart" in an American sense. It is a very disingenuous perversion of Sir John Coleridge's statements. What Sir John says of the past, "Paterfamilias" makes him say of the present. He knows Eton too well to speak of the monopoly as still unbroken. He knows that in the last few years many King's men of high merit, and some of conspicuous academical rank, have been passed over in the selection of masters at Eton, and that out of eight men appointed by the present head master, three were, though Etonians, not King's men.

He might have known, with a very little inquiry, that the monopoly was willingly relinquished by all members of King's College, gladly by some.

There is no longer, nor has there been for some little time, a monopoly granted to King's men; but, *cæteris paribus*, there is a preference. Now is there no reason for this preference? Admitting the great advantage of employing as masters, Etonians, who, as oppidans, have exhausted the social experiences of the school, admitting still further that it is possible that great and new strength might be added to the staff by enlisting a hearty and thoughtful man, provided he be a polished scholar, from Rugby, or from one of the daughters of Rugby, we may yet maintain that there is safety

* The vindication of this College has been undertaken in a letter addressed to the editor of the "Cambridge Chronicle," of December 29th 1860, by a gentleman not brought up at Eton, whose high scholarship has indirectly been of the greatest value to Eton, and has made her Cambridge sister the second light of classical literature in that University. If he is named as the Porson of our times, every Cambridge man, and most Oxford men, will know who is meant.

and wisdom in intrusting boys, so fastidious and so jealous of their constitutional rights as Eton boys are, to men whose growth of character has been closely watched from year to year, whose temper, and tact, and endurance have been tried, who have been almost apprentices in the craft of tuition under their future brother-journeymen. The world may not care whether Eton goes up and down like other schools, varying with the reputation of its office-bearers ; but the men who are free of the place, and look on it as their little England, their second country, will not forgive a head master, if he commits to strangers the tangled skein of customs which seems to be intertwined with ancient and unbroken prosperity.

Such men feel and say, that it does not so much matter that a master be clever, as that he think himself and his own wisdom less than the spirit of the school's constitution. A fearless liberal may say, and the present writer need not suppress his own belief, that there would be no real danger of throwing Eton out of gear by taking the best men from the universities, without asking where they were brought up ; but it is the truest liberality to respect the caution, even though one does not share the apprehensions, of those whose humility and conscientiousness make them hesitate to break in upon a traditional system which they feel to be greater than themselves.

Let us however proceed to the second perversion of Sir John Coleridge's words. "*Paterfamilias*" represents him as saying, that "the classical scholarship which used to be the pride and honour of the school has of late deplorably dwindled, especially amongst the oppidans, who constitute nine-tenths of the whole number of the pupils."

Does Sir John convey to the minds of ordinary readers an impression that he holds so strong and unqualified an opinion as this ? Is it not original composition only, and not classical scholarship generally, which he thinks is dwindling ? Does he not intend to admit, that modern Etonians are more regularly trained in philology than their predecessors ?

It does not indeed much matter whether he admits this or not ; for any one who has examined at Eton and other schools will tell you the simple truth, that Eton boys are

taught Greek and Latin neither worse nor better than the boys of the other high classical seminaries; and the tutors of Christchurch and Trinity are ready to say, that Eton men are as good scholars, and as teachable students, as any set of men they have in their colleges. The year 1860 was rather an unlucky one for these critical gentlemen to publish their remarks in, for there were three "oppidans" in the first class of "*literæ humaniores*" at Oxford; but this is not worth dwelling on. Some time before Sir John Coleridge lectured, the residents at Eton had been lamenting the falling off among the oppidans relatively to the collegers; and perhaps they may think that he need not have been in such a hurry to reveal it to the inhabitants of Tiverton, as he might have found out by a little easy inquiry, that from the 6th December, 1859, there had been lively and earnest discussion of the subject on the spot, and that there were already evident symptoms of amendment.

But surely it is one thing to lament, as he did, the shortcomings of the oppidans relatively to the collegers, and another thing to say that the classical scholarship of the whole school, "especially among the oppidans," had "deplorably dwindled."

All one can say is, that if Sir John Coleridge thinks it kind and discreet to tell strangers of a merely temporary and incidental evil in the school at the very time when the school is striving to remedy that evil, it serves him right to be embraced and bedaubed by "Paterfamilias."

"An immediate and liberal increase in the educational staff" is pointed out as "the only and obvious remedy for the evil," viz. inadequate instruction in classics, mathematics, and modern languages. Leaving the question of modern languages to be dealt with separately, and observing that eight masters are enough for the mathematical lessons as long as they are so much fewer than the classical lessons, a candid reformer may at once admit that literature would gain by an increase in the number of classical teachers. But this does not involve the admission that the increase need be large, or can be made suddenly. Much less need it be acknowledged that this is "the only remedy," however ob-

vious it may be. Such an evil as Sir John Coleridge has revealed to the enemy, the comparative idleness of those who are not working for college endowments, might be — perhaps is already — remedied by measures quite within the reach of the existing teachers. In days which Sir John looks back upon as better than ours, there were certainly fewer teachers; but he would say, and perhaps justly, that they were more efficient. The truth is, that when the prizes and honours of the school were, for the most part, gained by oppidans, the collegers were more like the refuse than the cream of the school; and those oppidans, whose performances are now remembered, were the select few, for whose sake the common herd was in a great measure neglected. Within the last few years it may be true, that tutors have given up their spare time too exclusively to those who were eager to get on, and whose worldly prospects were known to depend on their success in examination. Suppose that there has meanwhile been some waste of literary capabilities amongst the sons of the more wealthy, is there not something to be hoped for from a spontaneous recognition of this temporary neglect? Why should it be assumed that a respectable body of professional men should be blind to their own shortcomings? Is it not reasonable to suppose that the yearly criticism of the two examiners for the Newcastle scholarship, is enough, without the aid of a pamphlet or a magazine, to indicate a weak point, like the relative idleness of the older oppidans? There is much to be said on this subject, which has been said on the spot, and cannot with propriety be discussed publicly. Those who really know the school will need no assurance that evils within the control of the masters are pointed out by them to one another, honestly considered, and promptly remedied, in all cases in which men can recur to known principles and traditions.

But the required increase of the classical staff is not one of those improvements which depend upon the will of the masters. For in the first place, the eighteen “assistants,” whom “Paterfamilias” so elegantly describes as “shareholders in a mere money speculation,” have no voice in the appointment

of a colleague, and can do nothing either to prevent or to cause an increase in their number. And in the second place, the Head Master and the Lower Master, in appointing their assistants respectively, are hampered by physical difficulties: for, firstly, they have no school-rooms for new assistants to occupy with their classes; and, secondly, they have no houses, nor even suitable lodgings, to offer them. In these last few words has been indicated a greater "evil" than any that "Paterfamilias" has found in Sir John's disclosures. There are reasons, obvious enough to Etonians, which make it undesirable to dwell on the hindrances in the way of physical or structural enlargement. But what scruple need there be in confessing that the greatest of all hindrances to reform, greater than antiquity, greater than a complex arrangement of powers, is prosperity? Any one who knows human nature must be aware that he cannot generally expect anything but patching and stitching and darning in a fabric that has undergone no great rending. Those who have seen in their own lifetime a body of seven Upper School assistants increased to fourteen, cannot be expected to be quick in embracing the opinion of one who murmurs ever so gently at the largeness of classes.

But let us suppose that a crash of adversity had compelled the rulers of Eton College to reconsider every old arrangement, and to adopt the latest improvements in education.

What number would the most enlightened head master, acting in freedom, and striving to satisfy the fathers of families, have fixed upon as the maximum of a class?

On this question we are not left entirely to conjecture. About fifteen years ago an old and glorious school was reduced to the verge of ruin. The best man to be got by competition was selected to restore it. He had a clear field for reconstruction. He had perfect freedom afterwards to make such improvements as experience suggested.

What is the maximum of a class at Harrow? Is it not thirty-five?

Now, what is the maximum of a class at Eton? It appears to be, in the Collection List of December 1860, fifty-five. This no doubt is a startling difference. But the *ave-*

rage number of a class in the Upper School, that is to say, in the first six hundred and eighty-three boys, appears by the same document to be not fifty-five, but forty-five and a fraction.

So far then may it be admitted, at first sight, that Eton is inadequately officered according to the Harrow standard. But it is worth while to say, that, but for circumstances which cannot here be mentioned, there would have been sixteen and not fifteen classical masters for the six hundred and eighty-three boys, reducing the average number of a class from forty-five and a fraction to forty-two and a fraction. So that the real difference between the two conceptions of what a division ought to be is not very great. "Paterfamilias," of course, will meet this by referring to the off-hand sentence at the beginning of his article, in which Harrow is coupled with Eton as full of "disfiguring and paralysing faults." But other men may be inclined to think it not unlikely that an institution which regained public confidence after a thorough recasting, is adequately provided with teachers, and, if they think so, they will see nothing very monstrous in the insufficiency of the staff at Eton.

Whatever may be thought of this insufficiency (which to the present writer is clearly established as a fact), it should be distinctly kept in view that the thing to be considered first is, not the number of a man's pupils, but the number of his school-class, or "division." Possibly thirty-five may be too great a number. This is a question that might with advantage be talked over in a conference of schoolmasters. There are many questions, purely professional, connected with this cardinal question. Only let this be kept in mind. It is more easy to fix the number of boys who can be ruled, examined, and lectured in a division, (though this must vary with the age of the boys, and perhaps with the experience of the teacher,) than it is to fix the number of a man's pupils. For with one's pupils the stress of work lies in looking over exercises; and the amount of time a man can give for this office-work depends upon his health, his quickness, his power of sitting up at night, his household occupations, and his

personal tastes. One man may be overworked with twenty pupils; another may feel that he is duly braced up to proper activity by fifty pupils. Every pupil-room must be divided into several "sets" of pupils; and, whilst there is risk of oversight, if a "set" be too large, there is no less liability to dullness for man and boy, if the "set" be very small.

To limit the number in a "division" is a matter for the Head Master's calculation; to equalise the number of pupils is not so easy. For the selection of a tutor is left to parents and guardians. If a tutor has too many pupils*, it is in a great measure the fault of the people who ask him to take their boys. He is, like an over-busy counsel, the victim of his own reputation. A man who sends his son to an over-worked tutor does it with his eyes open, since he can easily ascertain by inquiry how many pupils the tutor has, and what his character is for regularity or carefulness.

Sir John Coleridge argues that no man can teach forty boys, because no private schoolmaster undertakes so many without an assistant. This is like the reasoning of a man fresh from Cambridge "coaching," who, on finding out from an Eton tutor that he had thirty pupils, said, "How can you take so many? Clearly you can't give them an hour a day each." It is well known that economy of labour is attainable in large establishments, and that the weight of an anchor does not bear a constant ratio to the ship's tonnage. Half the superiority of a public school consists in the stimulus given by brisker competition: how are you to have this without having larger classes than you have in private schools? In a private school of forty boys there would probably be four masters: it does not follow, that if the boys were eighty, the masters would be eight. The best man alive might give up his whole time to teaching five boys: it does not follow, that any one of them would learn more, than if he were taking up a fractional part of three men's time in the company of fifty or five hundred

* It seems to be the popular belief that most of the tutors have many more than forty pupils. Divide the 683 of the Upper School by 17, which is the number of tutors, since there are three Lower School Masters who take Upper School pupils.

schoolfellows. These things depend on considerations more complicated than the rule of three.

Sir John asks whether an Eton master does not undertake to teach his pupils more than a private schoolmaster. It is not at all self-evident that he need undertake to do so. He may hope and even promise that the boy will make more real mental progress at Eton than at a private school, but he will undertake for himself only to be one of many agents in effecting this result. He will even own that for many boys he can do less than their schoolfellows do. He trusts in the manifold influences of a great and vigorous society far more than in his own direct communication of knowledge.

We must now approach a topic on which "Paterfamilias" might have written effectively and usefully had he taken more pains to imitate the judicial temperance which he admires in another. But that which is in one man's hand a wand to point with, is for another a bludgeon to flourish in the dark. Without however examining the difference between the two statements, we will proceed to show what amount of truth there is in the assertion made on the authority of the first writer in the slashing sentence of the second, that at Eton "mathematics and modern languages are systematically neglected."

And first of mathematics, it is necessary to say, for the information of old Etonians who left the school more than seven or eight years ago, that, besides the annual Tomline examination, which brings a competent critic from an university to expose whatever weakness there may be in the mathematical training, there is for mathematics all through the school the same machinery as there is for classics, with these differences, that the lessons are far fewer, the marks given in trials are not so many, the preparation of work for school is not superintended by the ordinary tutors, and the distinctions, though more numerous, are not valued so highly. In other words, mathematics are taught, enforced, encouraged, allowed to affect a boy's place very materially, but treated all the while as secondary. Probably there is no seminary in England in which classics and mathematics are on an equal footing. In the greatest of all seminaries, Trinity College,

Cambridge, mathematics hold the second place; but what Trinity man would allow that they are "neglected"?

The amount of time given to mathematics in the Eton time-table is believed to be the same as is given at other high classical schools, three hours a week in school, and whatever time is wanted for three exercises done by a boy in his own room. Whether this is enough to do more than insure grounding in the elements, is a question for professional men. It is believed, that it does insure a boy's going to Cambridge with enough knowledge for ordinary purposes. If a boy has a special aptitude for these studies, he can give several hours a week out of his spare time to private or extra study under one of the mathematical teachers selected by himself with the concurrence of his tutor. With this aid a boy may go to Cambridge qualified to compete for a high place among the wranglers, though perhaps not likely to contend successfully with the Scottish graduates, who begin their career in a southern university after attaining a ripe manhood in the north. It should be distinctly understood that Eton does not profess to prepare a boy for the scientific branches of the army. If it is intended that a boy should go to Woolwich, he must leave Eton sooner than he would if he were going to the university. The preparation for Woolwich must be left for the last year or two to one of those private tutors who make it their special business, and the candidate for the Academy must forego the games and literary amenities of a public school. But, if this private tutor does not find his Eton pupil well grounded and teachable, he has a right to complain.

Is this complaint often made? Does it often happen, that a man finds his son successful in mathematics at Eton, and unfit, when sent to a private tutor, to be specially prepared for Woolwich?

As for the unscientific departments of the army, if any one says, that full-grown Etonians go straight from the school to the Chelsea examinations, and are rejected for want of mathematical knowledge, there is nothing to be done but meet the assertion with a denial.

Many dunces and idlers are taken away from the school

before they have finished the course, and, having spent some years with private tutors of more or less efficiency, are defeated at the Chelsea examination; and then, because they have been at Eton a year or two, the school gets the discredit of their failure. But this is not fair.

On the whole, it is thought right at this point to express a tolerably mature opinion, to the effect, that there is as much real industry brought to bear at Eton upon mathematics as on classics, and that there is as much room for improvement in the one line of business as in the other.

We now come to a sentence which shows how carelessly this invective against Eton was written —

“To teach the whole school French, there is *one* French master, an Englishman; and the one assistant mathematical master, who is not allowed to take equal rank with the classical masters, furnishes what additional help he thinks required by contract, such additional help being paid for *extra* by the pupils.”

This means, grammatically, that the mathematical masters help the French master. It has actually been found difficult to convince a logical reader, that “Paterfamilias” did not mean this. A gentleman, who undertakes to guide his neighbours in the selection of a school, should write more correctly. But let us debit “Harchester” with this slovenliness, and pass on to the errors of statement.

It may be worth mentioning that there appeared last summer, in the “Army and Navy Gazette,” a letter, signed “Paterfamilias,” containing a similar statement about the whole school being taught French by one master. A little better information was communicated to the “Gazette” in a civil note, which was not inserted, nor for several weeks acknowledged. When it was acknowledged, the editor of the “Gazette” hinted at the future appearance of something more from “Paterfamilias.” If these two gentlemen were in communication, might not “Paterfamilias” have read the suppressed note? Might he not have modified his statement, or asked for more details? It looks rather like a fixed resolve to make out the worst case against the object of attack.

There are two French masters at Eton, one of whom is a Frenchman. This would be manifestly far from enough, if the whole school learned French. But it is not so. The study of French is still optional; and, although in the more important school trials French papers are set for those who volunteer to do them, and marks are given to those who attain a certain standard, yet the French masters are still "extra" masters, and the study an "extra" study. It is not however pretended that this is a satisfactory state of things. It is indeed evidently a state of things which is called "transitional:" and in a place like Eton a transition may be expected to be slow.

He, who thinks that it is due to Rome and its language to observe their more recent phases, and who believes that Eton, above all other seminaries, is bound to prepare boys for political and military action, has two reasons, one literary, the other patriotic, for wishing that the study of the French language should be an integral part of the school work. He, who has seen how difficult it is to study English history and philosophy without writing, how extremely difficult it is to express the knowledge of an Englishman in Latin prose, and how much that is really classical is left on one side by those who run in the groove of Cicero, may reasonably wish to see boys compelled to write their abstracts of history and their attempts at rhetorical and logical exercises in a language commensurate with their native tongue. This is probably the great reform that remains to be brought about by some bold and unfettered schoolmaster.

But the work must be done by Englishmen, and by Englishmen critically trained in ancient scholarship. The regular classical masters should teach French and Italian in continuation of Latin lessons, and as a supplement to Latinity. They should analyse a French as they do a Latin sentence; they should treat Noel and Chapsal as they treat Arnold or Kennedy; they should read Thierry as carefully as they read Livy, looking as closely to etymology, to geography, and to all the knowledge collateral to the text; and they should look over French themes as microscopically as Latin themes.

It may take a generation to bring this about, but it will be done.

It is not strictly correct to say, that there is "one assistant mathematical master, who is not allowed to take equal rank with the classical masters." There are eight assistant mathematical masters, all invested with full powers for maintaining discipline in school: of these, one has the full powers of a master out of school, differing nevertheless from others with whom he ranks in not being the tutor of pupils. This gentleman's position is anomalous; and the anomaly may be accounted for by his having been a long time ago the only teacher of mathematics, and by his being still wanted, in default of a mathematically trained head master, to exercise the authority of a lieutenant over seven subalterns. This delegated primacy is so far from being a scandal, that it is well worth considering, whether the classical department should not be subdivided, each section being superintended by a senior master: but this again is a purely professional matter of detail.

He "furnishes such additional help as he thinks requisite [*i. e.* for himself, not for the French teacher] by contract." This is quite incorrect, though it is probably founded on information which, when given several years ago, was correct. For some considerable time there have been salaries paid to the assistants of the mathematical master, upon a fixed scale, but varying with the number of the boys in the school. For this salary, every one of them gives so many lessons a week, like a classical master. In addition to his salary, he may, and generally does, take private pupils, charging extra for lessons given out of school hours: this is quite optional. That is to say, seven out of the eight mathematical teachers, besides serving in school with public classes so many hours a week for such or such a stipend (varying according to their seniority), act also as extra masters for voluntary students. This plan works well. But Sir John Coleridge is right in saying that it would work better if these gentlemen were from the first complete masters; of which the plainest test would be their calling over the names at "absence" for the Head Master, and taking the official seats in chapel by ro-

tation. What has been said before about houses contains the germ of a further suggestion for the improvement of their position: but of this we are not called upon to speak here.

The next subject to which "Paterfamilias" calls our attention is the extravagance and self-indulgence of boys. And here he has wisely contented himself with quoting Sir John's doubts and questions instead of turning them into dogmatic statements.

It would be easy to say, that expense and luxury depend upon the funds supplied by parents, and that the rulers of the school cannot contend against the influences of home. There is some truth in this, but not enough, for any one capable of seeing more than one thing at a time, to rest upon contentedly.

There have been times in the last fifteen years, when a foolish and vulgar fashion has been introduced by one or two boys, and might have been driven out by one or two masters. There is, indeed, hardly any conspicuous aberration from taste and sense which may not become, at least for a time, customary, if overlooked by masters; and the custom may become a yoke, which parents individually groan under, and can hardly combine to break. Repeated experiments establish this truth, that such a custom may be got rid of by the better feeling of the boys acting, though not consciously, nor immediately, under the persuasion of their teachers. If then there is luxuriousness amongst Etonians, fair allowance being made for the influence of the age they live in, let the blame rest on the masters. But it is not at all certain that there is. The truth seems to be that Eton is like Athens, not like Sparta. The expenditure of an Eton boy is much more on games and society than on anything else; it is his activity, not his sloth, that makes him draw upon his father. Games, as every one knows, are to schools what military and naval affairs are to nations; and the progress of civilization makes them more and more costly. Cricket is a sort of profession, and draws away as much money as the study of an art or a science. Football, which is almost universal, is cheap and hardy enough for a Spartan. Swimming is as universal, and as cheap, as football. Boating is decidedly costly, though

the most costly forms of the amusement, or rather the occupation, are limited to the few. There is a good deal of outlay on the annual *fêtes* connected with boating, which give more pleasure, to a greater number of people, than any other entertainments that could be devised. In none of these charges, though they swell the bills, do we find selfish luxury. All this outlay savours of vigour and public spirit. But there are some convivialities, that remind one of the "Harchester" age, still kept up by the boys, and with no little misgiving. They are too conservative to abolish these forced merry-makings; but, if they were to vote by ballot, there would hardly be a majority for keeping them up.

Then, there is something like a Club, limited and fashionable, involving the expenditure of 3*l.* a year for each of its twenty-eight members. In this, perhaps, an austere censor might detect a divan too soft for youthful limbs, and an affluence of cream-laid paper. But this Club is a debating society, which has flourished fifty years: it is a little school of statesmanship; it is, in its perfect freedom from inspection or patronage, the very symbol of Eton trustfulness; it is the mirror of decorum, and the centre of intelligence; and no father, whose son is elected into it, grudges the money spent on it.

Over and above these claims on an active boy's finances, there is a very natural taste for the decoration of one's private room. How can you object to his making a home of it, and filling it with signs of taste and refinement? Would it not be an usurpation if a tutor were to enforce a sumptuary law against ornaments on the chimney-piece or prints on the wall? Opinions may differ as to easy-chairs; but let us be tolerant: it is an age of comfort; and the lounging of school-boys no more disqualifies them from bearing pain in a football crush, than do the saloons of Pall Mall unfit our warriors for the trenches.

What is said about excessive distribution of prizes and honours, it is not easy to reconcile with what is elsewhere said about the want of a machinery for eliciting emulation, and the systematic neglect of mathematics.

But in answer to Sir John Coleridge, who touches only on

literary distinctions, it is as well to state that a hundred years ago the honour which he says was conferred only four times on the present Bishop of Lichfield, was conferred no less than fifteen times on a versifier whose name he will find in college archives inaccessible to a pamphleteer. If an Eton boy now-a-days has "twenty honorary marks to his name" (that is to say, the figure 20), this simply means that in a career of five or six years he has been distinguished once or twice every school-time as a versifier and good student. If this were the case with many boys, it would make the honour cheap. But in the last School List you will find only two boys with the figure 15, one with 12, one with 11, two with 10, and so on. There are forty-four boys with this sort of distinction. It is a plain matter of fact, that it is an honour hard to win, and highly valued.

Sir John Coleridge notes the difference between his generation and ours. He does not and cannot presume to say that versification is too much encouraged in modern Eton. He probably means that the standard of excellence is lowered. Now this depreciation of a schoolmaster's labour is very common, and rather irritating. Let the "sent-up" exercises of last year be compared in a batch with the "sent-up" exercises of the year 1800, or 1795, or any one year Sir John chooses. Let us see which batch is the more scholar-like, the umpire being some such scholar as Dr. Kennedy or Mr. Merivale. And then let us have done with these carpings at honest men's work.

The implicit censures of a prudent and gentlemanly writer are harder to deal with than the explicit charge of incompetency brought by an imitator of Cobbett against the Head Master of Eton; a charge which has been generously met and overthrown by the eminent scholar whose letter to a Cambridge paper has been already cited under another head. Whatever may be the income of the Head Master of Eton (and it is certainly overstated in the "Cornhill Magazine"), there is no self-evident impropriety in its being equal to the stipend of a bishop, because it is not enjoyed in old age, and it is one of the few great prizes of a profession. If it were given by favour it would of course be indefensible: as a

matter of fact, the appointment is made (if we may use the phrases of the War-office) on "seniority" modified by "selection." In this case, and in the case of the assistants, whose emoluments are, by the same rough calculator, nearly doubled, there would be nothing for the world to meddle with, if the appointments were thrown open to men not educated at Eton. • We are not to ask, what pecuniary reward is given to philosophers, whose chief reward is social position, but rather to consider, what profits could be made out of a private school by a man who had been, or was fit to be, a master at Eton. "False delicacy" prevents our dealing with names and figures quite freely, but there is perhaps no harm in stating, that, if this comparison could be made, it would be found, that a man gained ease, and lost no money, by becoming the head of a private school, instead of holding a subordinate position at Eton.

As a lesson in Political Economy for "Harchester" men like "Paterfamilias," it may be as well to point out that the income of an Eton master is not, as he seems to think, mere wages of labour, but also profits. If Dr. Owen took zoologists to board in his house (begging his pardon for thus using his honoured name), he would perhaps get a profit on the business over and above his stipend. But suppose there were nothing but wages in the schoolmaster's case. The rate of wages does not depend upon intellectual attainments merely. A schoolmaster is more highly paid than a man of science, partly because it is the custom, partly because the occupation is irksome, and to many men repulsive. A country vicarage, tenable for life, worth 600*l.* a year, would be gladly accepted by many a schoolmaster who can make by his profession 1200*l.* There are perhaps about six or eight* men every year at the two universities put together who come forth from their degree-examinations qualified, physically and mentally, in health, manners, scholarship, industry, prudence, and the like, for Eton masterships. Of these some will have assured prospects at their university, others will have a call to holy orders and

* This calculation is of course based upon the demand for high abilities made by those who think the men now employed at Eton not quite competent.

parochial life, the rest will be ambitious enough to try the Bar. If you ask one of these to change his plan and become a schoolmaster, you ask him to forego his chance of marrying into a good connection, his chance of political employment, his chance of high Church preferment, his college tranquillity, his London club-life, his literary projects, his social equality with many of his old friends. So prosaic is the mind of man, that you must offer him an early marriage (however humble), and an income out of which he can save in twenty years enough to last for twenty more. You certainly will not get him to stay for the stipend which the Chancellor of the Exchequer finds to be enough to create a lively competition amongst men of science. You may get fairly good men, but not the men you would think worthy of the pupils sent to them by the first families in England: the supply is limited, though you look beyond Eton for it, of real scholars, who can not only coerce and teach, but lead and invigorate, the gilded youth of Great Britain.

The next and last sentence of the Cornhill libel, which contains a statement not yet investigated, is to this effect:—

“A comparison of the number of hours and minutes which the day contains with the amount of school and private business to be gone through by the twenty Eton tutors, will convince the most prejudiced that the slightest acquaintance with the character or supervision over the manners, morals, or pursuits of the boys under their care when out of school, is impossible.”

This is a very reckless and foolish assumption. The man who wrote this stuff can hardly maintain his authority as an assailant of abuses. More than half of a master's work is done “out of school,” under circumstances which bring him into easy communication with his pupils on other matters besides lessons. On Sunday he has nothing to do but attend to his pupils; and dividing them according to their age into four or five classes, he can without haste and without restraint talk with them on topics suggested by their scriptural lessons: and this is regularly done by all tutors with all their pupils. If he has a house, he meets those who board in it at dinner almost always, at supper generally, at prayers twice a day,

and in visits paid to them about twice in a long, once in a short, evening, in their own rooms. If he has not a house, he has more time to give them, and is accessible to any one with or without a pretext for visiting him. So frequent and full is the interchange of talk between tutor and pupil, that one of the tutor's constant difficulties is to avoid getting into a false position from knowing things that boys tell him. Every boy takes it for granted that his tutor knows, or wishes to know, everything that the boys are interested in. The school is held together by mutual confidence, and this is the growth of constant intercourse. Even in the Tiverton lecture there is enough said to show that the old and the young at Eton know each other and are good friends.

It would be a waste of time to ask, what "Paterfamilias" would wish the masters to do out of school. Even he is probably too good an Englishman to prefer to Eton freedom the "casernement intellectuel" which some people suppose to be the only alternative.

Old Etonians generally, at least those who are not married, are inclined to think that the regulation of games, the control over the use of leisure time, and the pastoral action of the tutor, are carried as far as they can be carried without violating the principles of the school's constitution. Strangers will perhaps be satisfied by asking those who have sons at Eton, whether they feel that their children are living with men who are interested in them and well acquainted with them. The answer will not always be the same; nor are all tutors equally prosperous.

Probably there are schools in which there is a heartier sympathy between boys and men generally than at Eton; but, if it be so, this will be found to be an inheritance from one or two great hearts, not the result of a closer supervision and a more complete staff of school-proctors.

Where however there is a zeal on one side, and a personal loyalty on the other, each more fervid than is known at Eton, there is also probably a marked difference between boys who are, and boys who are not, on the side of their masters. There is, in other words, a stronger moral pressure, because there is more to contend against. No one, who has not

known the modern representatives of Eton, can easily conceive, how little masters have to fight against in the tempers and habits of those who come to them from refined and highly-cultivated families. Such is the gentleness and serenity of their bearing, so fine is their perception of what is due to others, so deeply impressed are they with the sense of the honour they owe to their homes, that a man may be tempted almost to think, that there is no need of his vigilance, and no scope for his exhortations.

WM. JOHNSON.

Jan. 11, 1861.